CG 123
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CG 123 OTTAWA

CCG 123 — SAR 400 CLASS CUTTER

The prototype of a new class of 21m Coast Guard search and rescue cutter, CCG 123, arrived on station in Prince Rupert early in 1981.

CCG 123 is the first full-time search and rescue unit to be based in Prince Rupert. The vessel was built in Port Hawkesbury, N.S., by Breton Industrial and Marine Ltd. Total cost of the vessel and its equipment is approximately $2.3 million. It will provide 24-hour, 365 days-a-year coverage in waters off Prince Rupert. The CCG 123 has a range of 300 nautical miles at a top speed of 20 knots.

CCG 123 has a beam of 5.72m, draws 1.5m and displaces 40 tonnes. It is powered by two lightweight, eight cylinder, MTU diesel engines manufactured in West Germany. The engines produce 1600 horsepower.

The design of the 400 Class search and rescue cutters is based on the 20m pilot boats and other offshore crew boats. Although modified for its search and rescue role, the 21m Coast Guard cutters have the good seakeeping features of the pilot boats and the ability to maintain speed in adverse weather. The 400 Class cutter fills the gap between the larger offshore search and rescue cutters and the smaller shore-based launches used for inshore search and rescue.

With her arrival at her new home port, CCG 123 increases the Coast Guard's primary search and rescue fleet on the West Coast to 14 vessels. During the peak summer boating season another five inshore rescue boats augment the SAR resources. As well, four Department of Fisheries vessels are multi-tasked for search and rescue.

In addition to search and rescue duties, the crew of the CCG 123 will be heavily involved in the Coast Guard's boating safety and accident prevention programs. The crews, who have taken boating safety courses, will conduct courtesy inspections for pleasure craft to advise owners whether or not their vessel carries the required safety equipment. Such courtesy inspections will be extended to small fishing vessels (under 15 tons) as part of safety programs for the roe herring and other fisheries.

Initially, the vessel will be berthed at a float in the National Harbours Board Fairview Terminal facility. It will be manned by two crews of five, and will be operated as a day-boat similar to that of the three 13m lifeboats. The crew will be onboard the ship for an eight hour shift and then will be on 20 minutes recall for the duration of the day. The crews will be rotated periodically. Masters of the CCG 123 are Jack Wells and Tom Burdett.

The crews will not live aboard CCG 123, but the vessel has been equipped for extended search and rescue operations. It is fitted with navigational and communications equipment, including VHF and HF direction finders, AM and FM VHF radios, HF single sideband radio and CB radio, required for search and rescue. Other equipment includes an inflatable rubber boat, which can be launched and picked up over the stern, "night sun" search lights, life rafts, and fire fighting apparatus.

A feature of CCG 123 is an aft steering position located near the towing bitts. This allows the CCG 123 to work more effectively in close quarters or when arranging towing lines.

Search and rescue assistance will continue to be available from patrolling 29m cutters Ready, Rider and Racer: the Prince-Rupert based Coast Guard aids to navigation vessels Alexander Mackenzie and Cloo-Stung: and from the volunteers of Rescue 15.

In 1980 there were 244 search and rescue incidents in Dixon Entrance and Hecate Strait, about five per cent of the total on the West Coast for the year. The Cloo-Stung responded to 34 of those incidents and the aids to navigation ship Alexander Mackenzie took part in another nine. Rescue 15, a provincial Emergency Program group, responded to 67 incidents.

Additional Coast Guard search and rescue coverage of waters further offshore in Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and the waters off the Queen Charlottes and Vancouver Island will be provided with the arrival this summer of a large, high endurance search and rescue cutter. The offshore search and rescue vessel was recently purchased for $4 million.

The CCG 123 is the first of the 400 Class Coast Guard search and rescue vessels to see service. A sister ship is scheduled to go into service in Campbell River early in 1982. Long-range search and rescue plans call for additional 400 Class cutters on the central and northern coasts and the Queen Charlotte Islands to replace an ageing search and rescue fleet, as well as add to search and rescue coverage.

When not required for search and rescue operations, CCG 123 will provide assistance in maintaining navigational aids in the Prince Rupert area, and she can also be called upon for oil pollution duties.

The arrival of CCG 123 brings the strength of the Prince Rupert Coast Guard District Base, located at Seal Cove, up to three ships and 117 personnel. This includes the crew of the large Sikorsky 61 aids to navigation helicopter.

Coast Guard Search and Rescue Vessels

	Type	Length	Base
Rider	R Class Cutter	29m	Vancouver
Racer	R Class Cutter	29m	Victoria
Ready	R Class Cutter	29m	Victoria
CCG 123	400 Class Cutter	21m	Prince Rupert
CCG 122	Launch	13.2m	Ganges
SRN5	Hovercraft	11.8m	Vancouver
SRN6	Hovercraft	14.7m	Vancouver
Relite	Launch	12m	Campbell River
Lifeboat	Launch	13.4m	Bamfield
Lifeboat	Launch	13.4m	Tofino
Lifeboat	Launch	13.4m	Bull Harbour
Mallard	Launch	12.2m	Kitsilano
Moorehen	Launch	12.2m	Kitsilano
Cloo-Stung*	Launch	13.2m	Prince Rupert

* the Cloo-Stung is multi-tasked for a dual role for search and rescue and as an aids to navigation vessel.

For further information, contact District Manager, CCG Base Prince Rupert, 624-9146.